EYE ON LEARNING

Lifelong Learning Institute's Calendar Available

You can find the Eye on Learning newsletter on DWITE, IDWD's intranet website. The schedule of upcoming classes will be published each month during 2006. If you do not have access to DWITE, this information can be found by accessing the IDWD website at:

http://www.in.gov/dwd/partners/lli.html

When additional training opportunities are scheduled throughout the year, staff will be notified via email and given the class and registration information.

Schedule of Upcoming Classes

Please register for these classes by submitting your registration forms to the Lifelong Learning Institute or by emailing LLI at LifelongLearningInstitute@dwd.in.gov.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

How to Perform Better at Your Job

By Nick Burkholder

From Staffing.org.

I've noticed that the frequency of the "What is *the single most* important practice to be successful?" question increases in direct proportion to the competition for jobs and promotions. I've never responded to (nor asked) the "What is *the*..." questions. Nothing is that simple and you, too, should avoid such questions. Besides, there are no less than three "most important" practices to optimize your career:

1. Get on the scale.

Although performance measurement is finally being embraced there is a reluctance to apply standard measurements to one's own organization or performance. At least this is a reservation that I understand. We're all for measuring -- others. It's measuring ourselves that is discomforting.

It is difficult to initiate any change let alone a practice that includes measurement. Making an appointment for a physical or starting an exercise or weight loss program is not easy but once started tends to bring out the conviction and passion of the recently converted. It's the same with measuring your own performance. I can tell you it is good for you, and you probably know it is good for you. It's getting started that is the hard part and no matter what I say or even you know, you have to start.

July 2006 Classes

11	E-Recruit for Customers	Richmond
11-13	Claimstaking I	Gary
11-12	MS Publisher	Evansville – Class Full
13	E-Resumes and Cyberspace Job Search	Evansville – Class Full
13	DECS	Columbus
14	E-Recruit for Customers	Ft. Wayne
18	Workplace Harassment **2-Sessions AM & PM**	Muncie
18	E-Recruit for Customers	Marion
19-20	IRA	Evansville
25	Workplace Harassment	Gary
26	Workplace Harassment	Gary
27	Workplace Harassment	Hammond
28	Workplace Harassment	Hammond

August 2006 Classes

2	Workplace Harassment	Vincennes
3	Workplace Harassment	Vincennes
7-8	Word Intermediate	OTB
7	E-Resumes and Cyberspace Job Search	Gary
8	E-Resumes and Cyberspace Job Search	Gary
9	E-Resumes and Cyberspace Job Search	Gary
8	Workplace Harassment	Ft. Wayne
9	Workplace Harassment	Ft. Wayne
10-11	MS PowerPoint -I	Ft. Wayne
15	Workplace Harassment	Madison
16	Workplace Harassment	Madison
18	Workplace Harassment - Make up **2 Sessions – AM & PM**	Indianapolis
17-18	Excel - II	Ft. Wayne
22	Sales Techniques	Evansville
22-23	Assessment Tools and Interpretation	Kokomo
24-25	MS PowerPoint - I	Kokomo
29-30	Sales Techniques	OTB

September 2006 Classes

12-13	Sales Techniques	Terre Haute
13-14	MS PowerPoint - II	Ft. Wayne
19-20	MS Word I	South Bend
26-27	MS Excel I	South Bend

Eye on LLI Staff

John Mahoney

John Mahoney has worked in the staff-training department with the Department of Workforce Development since 1988. Prior to becoming a trainer, John worked in a variety of positions including Counselor, Counseling Supervisor, Assistant Local Office Manager, JSEC Coordinator and JSMS Coordinator. Training programs he has developed (or co-developed) include New Employee Orientation, Defusing Workplace Violence, Dealing with Difficult Customers, Stress Management, Dealing with Change, Communication Skills, TQM and Service by Design, Customer Service, I Speak Your Language, FISH!, Preventing Sexual Harassment, Time Management, Problem Solving, Project Management, Employment Counseling, Testing, Interviewing Techniques, and Leading Effective Meetings. Other classes he has delivered include Building Trust and technical training on the agency's job matching systems (JSMS and CS3). He has also served as an ISO 9001:2000 Internal Auditor for the agency. John has handled logistics for local and statewide LLI training programs and has kept them running smoothly.

An avid auto racing fan, John has operated his own motorsports photography business for more than 40 years. His photos have appeared in countless publications and books. In 2004 he published FULL TILT!, a hardcover coffee table book featuring four decades of his most familiar work. He was inducted into the National Sprint Car Hall of Fame in 2005. His other passions include cooking, blues music and gardening.

John and his wife Martha are the parents of two children, J.J. and Liz.

We know that even the clear and present danger of cancer does not preclude some from smoking but I still must point out the clear and ever present likelihood of losing your job if you don't document your performance. When the CFO sees you, he or she is questioning what you cost the organization and what you contribute. Just as you must take responsibility and charge of your health, measure your own performance.

Done right, performance measurement is incredibly empowering. And measuring, just measuring improves performance as well as making the CFO smile.

2. Learn a project-management program.

Microsoft Project should be included in at least the Professional version of Microsoft Office. Of all their products, it will do the most to enhance your performance, and career. Project management software also provides an invaluable perspective to help you understand the intricacies of any engagement as well as plan and deliver.

Virtually all project management software helps you to clearly define assignments, effectively and realistically plan, execute according to plan, and evaluate post project performance. Project management software is more than a tool, which optimizes performance and promotes continuous improvement. It becomes an integral part of the work itself.

Learning a new or even upgraded word email, word processing, or spreadsheet program requires effort. And a project management program will require considerably more. However learning the most popular project programs requires you to approach the work in a very logical and comprehensive manner. It is worth the effort just to learn to recognize all the discreet elements, contributors, connections and timing to deliver on plan.

Project management software also serves as an ongoing operating guide and is an effective communications and reporting instrument. There is great value in the accumulated plan and actual timelines alone. And because the use of project management software outside technical functions is still relatively rare, it will reflect particularly positively on you.

3. Get your customer to help you to help them.

Inevitably we are so positive at the start of an assignment. This time we are going to do it right. This time, they'll be pleased with our performance. Good feelings all around. Optimism reigns.

And then everything starts to falls apart and becomes difficult, just like it always does.

It doesn't have to be. It can be easier.

First you must destroy your current working construct -- the one where you are given an assignment and your job is to complete it. Most work is not about getting the ball or baton and running with it. You cannot achieve optimum performance without getting help -- and answers from your customer.

A doctor that treats a patient without the patient's help will not be very successful. Contracting or consulting skills will help you to get your customers to help you, to help them. And like other timeless business practices, contracting skills enhance all work processes.

Before you can employ good contracting practices, it is essential that the customer understand what you do and how you can help them. That may well seem to be unnecessary, but it is important for the customer to understand your specific approach to work and how you can help them.

What is clearer and needs less explanation than a car salesman? But the most successful car salesman I've ever heard of explains that has an expert understanding of his product line and that of his competitors. If appropriate he adds that he is completely committed to using his expertise to help the buyer make the best choice, and to make the complete car acquisition experience as good as it possibly can be. That is a good start to any engagement.

The next step in the contracting process is to find out what the customer wants. This will probably be first met with a strong, if not precise declaration that you are expected to accept without question and get to work. However that certainly doesn't foster high customer satisfaction in the long run, or even the short. Even if it is the rare customer that knows exactly what they want, you are responsibly for helping them validate their requirements and consider other options.

The Magic Lamp

The gas mileage in the largest model may be a problem in light of the long commute. The two doors may make it harder getting the kids in and out of the back. You should present options if only to validate and better define the customer's requirements.

The third contract step is to let the customer know what you need from them. It the case of the car it is at least good credit and a down payment within a specific amount of time. The car won't be there indefinitely. If the buyer doesn't have good credit the salesman's time will be wasted. It's okay not to let the customer waste your time.

The fourth and last contract step is to reach an agreement. This sums up the purpose of the relationship, the customers requirements, and your requirements. This can be a simple e-mail or a complex sales agreement. But it is the standard that unless changed by mutual agreement, is the standard by which the work is evaluated.

Not one, not two, but three. These three practices will fundamentally improve your performance. And improving your performance is the best way, the only sure way to achieve career success.

-- Mr. Burkholder is the president of Staffing.org and a global authority on work-force design, selection and management.

You and your team have just found a lamp. You rub it, and surprise! A genie appears. The genie grants you three wishes. You are allowed to make three changes at work. You may change yourself, your boss, your job, the people around you, etc.

1. The facilitator will soon divide you into groups of three to five people and give your team a piece of flipchart paper and a marker.

2. Once you have your materials, design your wish list for your genie. When you are finished, post it on the wall.

Materials Needed:
Flipchart paper
Markers

Time:
Allow 10 minutes for setup, writing and posting lists on the wall. Allow 5 minutes for debriefing. If possible, leave the lists posted throughout your presentation and encourage further introductions and discussions.

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Celebrate Learning!

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